

# Melvin Ross Sheep Ranch

18

HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS

settlement, of course, was at Heber City, but there were also two small settlements along the Snake Creek, a number of families at Center Creek, some at Charleston, some in Round Valley or Wallsburg, a small cluster of houses at the Sessions spring and a few at a sheep ranch of Melvin Ross, afterwards known as Hailstone's Ranch, about eight miles north of Heber.

The first county road was established on March 3, 1862, and commenced at the Provo River below Manning's (southwest of the town of Charleston) and ran in a northerly direction following the old immigrant trail through the valley, passing by Melvin Ross' ranch and terminating at the northern boundary of the county known then as the Ross Summit.

Another county road was established April 26, 1862 and ran between Heber City and Center Creek and on to a sawmill in Center Creek Canyon.

Four school districts were also designated in April, 1862. They were district No. 1 to include Heber City; No. 2 at the Center Creek settlement; No. 3, the lower settlement on Snake Creek and No. 4 the upper Snake Creek settlement.

The first valuation of property for the county took place in 1862, and according to the report of John Harvey, assessor and collector, the property value in the valley was \$48,350.

Spring came late in 1862 and it was May 4 before any plowing could be done in the valley. The Church leaders who went to Salt Lake City for general conference sessions in April had to travel on snowshoes to get through the more than four feet of snow still on the ground.

Early in 1862 John H. Van Wagoner finished building a gristmill at Snake Creek's lower settlement. Even though there was no way to separate the smut from the wheat and some of the flour made was very dark, the people were still glad for this added improvement. At times that year the river was so high people couldn't get across to the mill. However, Henry McMullin, a ship builder from Maine, built a boat and the grist was taken back and forth on the boat. It was this same Mr. McMullin that built the first sawmill in the valley. It was owned by William M. Wall and James Adams and located in Center Creek Canyon.

Until the sawmill was built, people had used hand-prepared timber for all their furniture and other needs. Now with cut lumber available the rough furniture was quickly discarded.

Many of the people were able to obtain good wagons from the soldiers in Johnston's Army. The army had camped near Utah Lake until the outbreak of the Civil War in the East. They were summoned to return to the Northern Army's camps and so they sold some of their wagons and their supplies very cheaply rather than carry them back east. Many in Wasatch County obtained the wagons as the troops passed through the valley on their eastern trip.

North boundary  
of County was  
known as  
Ross Summit

Melvin  
Ross  
Sheep  
Ranch  
↓  
Hailstone  
Ranch

Where  
the  
story

21 Dec  
1906

Melvin Ross

Sheep Ranch

Hailstone ?

streets as a safety precaution. E. J. Duke and E. Parley Cliff were appointed to meet with club members to discuss the matter. It was some two years and several accidents later, however, before the poles were finally moved.

One of Heber City's leading physicians, Dr. H. Ray Hatch, became the community's mayor in the election of 1915. Chosen to serve with Dr. Hatch on the city council were G. Frank Ryan, four-year councilman; E. J. Duké, Isaac Jacobs, George M. Jorgensen and Parley A. Murdock. Later, Mr. Jorgensen moved from the city and John A. Anderson was appointed in May of 1916 to fill the vacancy. J. E. McMullin was elected recorder and Alfred Sharp was treasurer.

John A. Fortie became mayor in 1918 after winning the election the previous Fall. George Smith, Joseph A. Murdock, J. Fred Giles and Abe Turner comprised the city council, while Sylvan Rasband was treasurer and J. E. McMullin the recorder.

Taking office as mayor in 1920 was E. J. Duke. John H. Miller was four-year councilman with Moroni Moulton, George Smith, J. W. Mahoney and Andrew Murdock two-year councilmen. Douglas Giles was recorder and Emer Murdock, treasurer.

E. J. Duke again served as mayor during 1922 and 1923 with J. W. Giles, Heber G. Crook, L. D. Greenwood and J. Claud Hicken as members of the council. J. E. McMullin was recorder and Elmer Strong, treasurer.

In the election of 1923 J. E. McMullin won the mayoralty race, fulfilling a long time dream. While still a young man he had developed a desire to some day lead the affairs of the city.

"When in my early teens," he wrote, "and attending Central School, I had a deep desire to become Mayor of Heber City someday. I was so impressed with the idea I even chose my councilmen."

When he actually became mayor in 1924, two of his councilmen were among those he had previously considered. They were Jesse R. Nelson and J. W. Giles. Other councilmen were John H. Miller, Albert Dickson and T. Henry Moulton. J. Sylvan Rasband was recorder and Elmer Strong, treasurer.

During his first term, Mayor McMullin spearheaded the drive to organize the Heber Volunteer Fire Department. The area's first motorized fire engine was purchased in 1924 and "initiated" at a fire on Sept. 17, 1925, when hay, grain and straw belonging to Thomas, Erwin and Don Rasband began to burn in a field on the Charleston Road. The fire started from a spark from a threshing machine.

On Sept. 21, 1925 the city council passed an ordinance creating the official fire department and providing for fire inspection. The council also hired John Barnes at \$15 a quarter to sound the fire siren each morning at 7 a.m. as a time regulator.

The first members of the fire department included Frank W. Hardy.

Frank Ryan

Central  
creek

Buying  
& Selling

Homer  
"Ernest"



## WILLIAM MALACHI AND FLOWERETTE M. FRAUGHTON RYAN

William Malachi Ryan was born in Queens borough of New York City on October 2, 1848, a son of William Thomas and Hester Ann Ackerman Ryan. He married Flowerette M. Fraughton on July 12, 1869 in the old Salt Lake Endowment House. She

## CENTER CREEK BIOGRAPHIES



was born November 7, 1848 in Huntington, town of Borhornoise, East Canada, a daughter of George and Henriette Case Fraughton. She died in 1905 and William married first Mary Murdock Duke and Marion Stevenson Tracy-Goodle, both of whom preceded him in death. He died August 29, 1936 and is buried in the Heber Cemetery. The children of William and Flowerette are Sarah Violet, married to Henry McLean Aird; Elenor H., who died as an infant; Chloe Susette, married to Orvis J. Call; William Homer, married Sarah McDonald; John Ernest; George Franklin, married Jennett C. Jones; David Leslie, married Laverna Jeffs and then Ruth Lindstrom; Stanley Ackerman, who died as an infant and Alice Meda Eldora, married to Curtis Murdock.

William Ryan was baptized a member of the LDS Church at the age of nine, along with members of his family. When he was 14 he and his father started for Utah, arriving in Salt Lake on October 2, 1863 and then moving to Heber in the Spring of 1864. His marriage to Flowerette came five years later.

During the first seven or eight years of their married life, the Ryans made their home in Charleston and Heber and in Wanship, Summit County. In 1877 they moved from Wanship to Center Creek, where they homesteaded 160 acres of land in which they established what was to become their home until Mrs. Ryan's death in 1905.

The Ryan's first house on the homestead was a two-room log cabin built by Bill and his neighbors. Such items as nails were not available in the area at that time so the house was fastened together with wooden pegs. Later, Bill built the big house, as the family called it. It had six rooms and was indeed their pride and joy. It still stands as the home of Homer and Sarah

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Ryan, who purchased the old homestead after the death of Flowerette in 1905.

Bill was a plasterer by trade but, since few of the houses built at that time were of the type that required plastering, his opportunities to ply his trade were extremely limited. He was therefore forced to look elsewhere for an opportunity to earn the money required to supply the family with the few necessities which could not be raised on the land. He found this opportunity by obtaining employment in the mines in Little Cottonwood Canyon and in Bingham during the winter months. Later, he worked as a salesman for the Sidney Stevens Implement Company.

Bill was an ardent lover of music and he found an outlet for this by playing his violin, which he somehow managed to acquire in spite of the comparative poverty in which the family lived. His playing furnished a large portion of the entertainment for the family. As the boys grew older, each learned to play an instrument. Homer the violin; Ern the mandolin; Frank the guitar and violin and Les the guitar. The inevitable result of this musical talent was the formation of an orchestra and, for years, they furnished the music for most of the dances in the area. Later, a piano was purchased for Meda and she joined the boys to complete the orchestra.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of Bill's playing was to see him bowing the violin with his left hand and fingering it with his right.

Though Bill's formal education was extremely limited, he had a talent for learning readily from experience, observation and contact with people. His command of the language was quite remarkable and he possessed a real talent for writing. He was interested in all current issues of the times and, for several years, he wrote articles for the New York Journal under the pen name of "Wild Oats." Most of the articles were entitled "A Letter From Utah." They dealt with many of the problems confronting the settlers of a new territory.

Bill was a Blackhawk war veteran. He spent the last three or four years of his eventful career in Provo with his eldest daughter Violet. Here he passed away just a few months prior to his 88th birthday.

Flowerette was an excellent housekeeper and homemaker. Their first house, though furnished with only crude, home-made furnishings, was always kept spotlessly clean.

William Ryan  
& Sons

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HOV

The few home-made rugs which she was able to accumulate appeared as gems on the floor of pine boards which were kept scoured, with wood ashes, to a gleaming whiteness. The new house, furnished with its home-made carpets and a few pieces of horsehair padded furniture, provided her with a wealth of pride and added immeasurably to the pleasure of her homemaking. All of this, however, was overshadowed by her loving disposition and sweet smile, the kindness and consideration for all with whom she came in contact and her devotion to her family.

She was a talented dancer and it was not unusual, when friends gathered at their home, for Bill to tune up his "fiddle" and strike up the lively tune of "The Sailor's Horn Pipe" while she danced the double schottische to the delight of everyone present.

She was known to all as a wonderful mother, neighbor, friend and a real pioneer.